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STANDARDS FOR TEST USERS.
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TESTS, AS SELF-REVELATORY DEVICES, MUST BE INTERPRETED WITH THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF ENHANCING THE CHILD'S SELF-UNDERSTANDING. TESTING PROGRAMS NEED THE COORDINATING LEADERSHIP OF TOP-NOTCH PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE BOTH TECHNICALLY AND HUMANELY QUALIFIED. SCHOOL STAFFS, PARENTS, AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC NEED CONSTANT ASSISTANCE WITH THEIR GROWTH IN SOPHISTICATION REGARDING TEST USAGE. CHILD STUDY AND INDIVIDUAL APPRAISAL EFFORTS NEED THE BROADEST POSSIBLE BASE, AND THEY REQUIRE SKILLFUL USE OF A VARIETY OF METHODS FOR ENHANCING SELF-UNDERSTANDING AND STAFF UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHILD. EVERYTHING KNOWN ABOUT A CHILD REQUIRES RIGOROUS AND EXACTING STANDARDS OF VALIDITY, FRESHNESS, COMPLETENESS, AND DEVELOPMENTAL WHOLENESS. TESTING CAN AND MUST BE MANAGED WITH MINIMAL EMPHASIS UPON PRESSURE AND COMPETITIVENESS. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT USE OF TEST RESULTS IS IN INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING OR IN PROCEDURES WHICH HELP THE STUDENT UNDERSTAND, RETAIN, AND APPLY SENSIBLY WHAT TESTS REVEAL. SCHOOL TESTING PROGRAMS REQUIRE PERIODIC EVALUATIONS BY THE WHOLE STAFF. SENSITIVE UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION OF ETHICAL STANDARDS IS NEEDED. THIS ADDRESS WAS DELIVERED AT THE MICHIGAN SCHOOL TESTING CONFERENCE (ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN, MARCH 6, 1968). (WR)

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George E. Hill

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STANDARDS FOR TEST USERS

An Address Delivered at the
Michigan School Testing Conference
Rackham Building, The University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan
March 6, 1968

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The point of view regarding the uses of tests in schools which is developed in this paper rests upon some assumptions regarding the objectives and the programs of our schools. To understand what the writer has to say about tests and their uses he must, then, first state briefly what he thinks schools are for and what he thinks should be the characteristics of a good school program. His attention is focused primarily upon the elementary and secondary schools. However, what he has to say is—in his opinion, at least—just as applicable to colleges and universities, with proper adaptations and emphases appropriate to the developmental levels of their students.

The Objectives of Public Education

Characteristically the purposes of free education in this country get badly twisted, especially when the layman is considering why his children are in school. What are commonly called the "fundamentals" of education are, actually, concomitant, or contributory, learnings. The really important things which children need to learn are not reading, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music and the like. Important as these learnings are they serve a worthy purpose in one's life only as they enrich and make more functional the true fundamentals of education. These are such matters as the following:

1. Children need to mature in their understanding of themselves, to grow up in the habit of self-examination and self-understanding which makes rational the life of feeling, the life of the spirit, which is the real heart of humane human existence.

2. Children need to mature in their sense of responsibility for themselves, to develop a sense of self-regard which puts pride and a feeling of concern for others behind his management of his own personal resources and the use of these for socially constructive ends.

3. Children need to mature in their understanding of human relations, of how human beings can best live together in our complicated society. The end sought in this development of understanding is, of course, to be found in a fourth learning.

4. Children need to mature in their skill in human relations, in learning the art of harmonious and happy relations with the many others in their lives.

5. Children need to learn—and this learning starts much earlier than most schools recognize—the significance of education in the life of modern man, the relation between education and employment, and the respect for gainful employment which will enable them to move gradually toward becoming productive workers in the American economy.

6. Children need to mature in their ability to make decisions, to solve problems, to meet the multiple exigencies of life with reasonable skill in the use of their intellectual and emotional resources.

7. Children need to mature in their ability to meet changing conditions and to adapt to the necessity for change in both their personal and their vocational lives. "Learning how to keep on learning," as some have put it (Belby and Reeves, 31), is one of the most important of the learnings fostered by our schools.

8. Finally, children need to mature in their sense of values, the ideals that pull their behavior toward goals of improved human relations, the conscience which guides their daily decisions.

These eight learnings apply with equal relevance to education in the kindergarten and to education in the graduate school. Life is going to be productive and it is going to be satisfying only if the learner begins early in life to achieve these learnings and keeps on maturing with respect to them into adulthood. Of course, it is recognized that explicit attention to such educational ends as are suggested by these learnings will differ in the primary grades as against the secondary school and college. The intellectual content of maturing in these learnings will become broader and deeper as the processes of growing up move along. But let it be noted that far more seekers of the Ph.D. fail because of immaturity with respect to one or more of these eight learnings than because of intellectual incompetence.

The Characteristics of Effective Education

The use of tests in schools and colleges must take place within a framework of a well conceived set of principles which guide the instructional and pupil personnel program of the school. There are three principles which seem to us to be especially important: (Hill and Luckey, Ch. I)

1. The educational program must be developmental. Teaching must, to be successful, start where children are and must then help them to move along in the achievements seen as essential for their fullest development. If we want a 16-year-old to read skillfully, we don't wait until he is 14 to start teaching him to read. Yet there is a great deal of what could be called "too lateness" about much of our educational effort. The most startling ground swell of educational change in America today is the burgeoning of formal educational efforts in the early years usually called "pre-school." (What a misnomer that term is!)
2. The educational program must be integrative. It must hang together. The various aspects of a given child's educational experiences must be reasonably harmonious. The pupil is a person, not a brain plus a heart plus a physical structure plus a social being. His schooling must, then, be viewed by all of his educational helpers as contributing to his development as a person, not just a mind, or a body.
3. The educational program must be relevant. This is the principle that causes the most debate because we deal now with the relation of formal education and life itself. Making education relevant entails both making schooling meaningfully contributory to the living of real life and making educational experiences in the schools sensible to the child because he can see their relationship to life as he is currently living it. The teacher seeks to mediate for the child between what she is expected by society to teach and what are the current and anticipated realities of living outside the school.

> Thus good education not only helps the child grow up, it *insists* that he do so. Good education also helps the child remain and become a person whose life has integrity, whose life in and out of school makes sense because he sees where it is leading him. Good education also makes sense to the child because he sees that it is relevant to the realities of life, that it takes meaning from and adds meaning to his out-of-school life. It is moving him along toward the kind of life that he wants to live. Does all this mean that formal education must be completely attuned to, and never out of harmony with, life as children are already leading to? No. But good schools seek the achievement of goals which are attainable, provide learning experiences that have meaning to the children, and

encourage children along developmental paths that have been planned with insight, compassion, and high idealism.—(Hill and Luckey)

Standards for Test Users

A standard, we are told, is "something used by general agreement to determine whether or not a thing is as it should be . . . a level or grade of excellence regarded as a goal or measure of adequacy." (Webster's, 1421) If we accept this kind of definition, and I do, we are then talking about *excellence* in the use of tests, what *should* be in the use of tests, a *goal* toward which we strive in the use of tests to achieve the excellence in the practices of test users which might well be called true professionalism in these practices. In discussing such matters we naturally face the constant fact of current school practice, practice which is bound in some instance to fall below a recognizable standard of excellence. We are also bound to have to deal with practices that fail to meet our standard of excellence simply because the practitioner doesn't know any better. Perhaps no aspect of educational practice can better be used to illustrate both sub-standard and ignorantly inept practice than the field of testing.

With this rather critical and perhaps a bit pessimistic observation behind us, let us look more constructively at a series of what I have called "standards." These are arranged in no special order, although they begin with two standards that are, in this writer's opinion, fundamentally important. These first two standards color all the remaining statements and reflect the earlier formulations of this paper.

1. The most important user of tests in schools is the individual who takes them; therefore *all uses of tests should be geared to our primary concern for his best interests.* A test should never be administered to a student unless we can honestly show that the results will be in some way contributory to his total development. Note that the singular is used in these statements. This is because tests make sense only in terms of their relevance to the education of particular people. It has been said that all business is local. It is equally axiomatic that all education is individual. John Dewey once said that we might as well say we have sold when no one has bought as to say we have taught when no one has learned. He sensed more clearly than most of us the intensely individualistic nature of the learning processes.
2. Taking a test, or responding to an inventory, is a self-revelatory process; therefore *all testing and use of test results in schools must be done with a sharp insight into the understanding of the person being tested, his perceptions as to why he is being tested, his concerns about being tested, his ability to capitalize constructively upon the information which may*

come to him as a result of having been tested. One of the most common ways in which we kid ourselves in school and college testing programs is that those being tested know the whys and the wherefores of what we are up to and that they willingly and whole-heartedly respond as best they can and with honesty. It is not too difficult to detect test weariness, test wariness, test fears, and test resistance. Many persons in schools have faced a group of youngsters who show in many ways that they couldn't care less, or that they care too much, or that they are confused and fearful, of a test that is about to be administered to them.

It is the subtleties of test evasion, test dishonesty, and test goofing-off that escape us. Too often we are left with results on tests and inventories that are far from representative of what the person tested really could do, or that are far from representative of what he really thinks and feels, if the inventory is in the interest or personality area.

Let me now look at these first two standards together for a moment. We see tests as useful in contributing to the basic learnings we listed earlier, as well as to the contributory learnings more commonly called the "fundamentals" of schooling. But the whole testing and test using process is a very human process and it needs to be geared to the needs and to the view of things of the youngster we are trying to educate. First, then, we must be sure that he is willing to respond to the test or inventory before him with a reasonable degree of enthusiasm and with honesty. Unless he has been adequately prepared—both by instruction and by past experience with tests in his school—he will be neither enthusiastic nor honest. We may trick him at times. Gustad has made the preceptive comment, quoting Samuel Butler's famous exasperated statement, "I do not mind lying, but I hate inaccuracy." (Gustad, 39) So also with the youngster who has developed some sense of desire to "do well"—whatever that may mean—when he faces a test he does not understand the "why" of and thus resents. Though he may try to goof-off he may be tricked into doing quite well because he too hates inaccuracy. Or we may lure the younger child into responding to a test simply because he trusts teacher, or because the "games" we invite him to play are appealing.

We face the hard fact of life that even children at a quite early age begin to develop ramparts of their person which you and I are not going to storm successfully unless they want us to. A counselor friend of mine, for example, asked a group of high school students in an urban district to write down the statement they would most like her to transmit to their school counselors. The most common, bluntly translated, was "Don't be so nosey." One boy added, "When the counselor starts talking about my family I

break in and tell him I'm an orphan. That stops them!" The boy in question has two very live parents.

The one experience, more than any other, that will result in enthusiasm and honesty in test situations is the experience of finding that the results of tests and inventories are actually used conscientiously to help the youngster gain greater understanding of himself—his achievements, his abilities, his interests, his personal makeup. In a school which sees child study and individual appraisal as a process in which the student is a *partner* seeking to enhance his own self-understanding, rather than an *object* of study, testing can become a meaningful exercise seen by the students as important to them. This is not to gainsay the importance of teachers and counselors enhancing their understanding of their students. But we would like to insist that this is secondary to the more important purpose of seeking to help the youngster grow in understanding of himself. Need it be said that this emphasis in child study entails the provision of *many* experiences, besides those in the area of testing, that are intended to help the youngster gain insight into his own abilities, achievements and interests. The writer sat, one afternoon some years ago, with his wife, his second daughter's fourth grade teacher, and his daughter as we talked about Judy's nearly-completed fourth grade experience. Judy's teacher kept pushing her gently along as Judy described what she had achieved, some things she had not achieved, and how—in the fifth grade—she was going to attempt some further gains in educational development. Three people who loved her and were supportive of her were helping Judy through an important experience in self-examination and self-understanding. It was a great experience for all of us. Test results got mentioned; and their reinforcing evidences helped both Judy and her adult companions to see where she had been and where she might go.

So, test users must put self-understanding by the person tested as their primary objective and must gear all testing and test usage to the understandings, expectations, fears and attitudes of those being tested. Need it be said that this demands a lot of all of us? Classroom teachers in the elementary schools rarely talk today, as they once did, as if they were self-sufficient and needed no help from "outsiders" such as supervisors, counselors or school psychologists. It takes a team to apply these first two standards. This leads us to our third standard.

3. A lot of people are in the testing act—the child, his parents, his teachers, his counselor, his school psychologist, his principal, the system's superintendent, and a considerable public who are viewing school practices with a critical and increasingly perceptive eye; therefore *the test pro-*

gram of a school system should be coordinated and led by a person highly competent in both the technical and the human aspects of testing and test use.

It is difficult to say how large a school system should be to require a full-time test expert in this position. Actually, relatively small school systems could well use such a person full time; but commonly they cannot afford him—or her. But, whether full time or part time, *all* school systems need such a staff member. Such a person would, at best, be both technically educated with respect to all aspects of testing and professionally educated in the broader aspects of instruction and guidance. He should be a person committed first of all to the best possible interests of children, willing to see the testing program as contributory to this end, and never as an end in itself or as only an administrative tool.

Not uncommonly such a standard as this would be viewed as acceptable, if for no other reasons than the complexities of selecting, administering, scoring and deriving meaning from the results of tests. Technical know-how is generally recognized as essential for these tasks. But the coordinator of the school's testing program can make contributions which extend beyond these obvious tasks. It is interesting that the 1937 session of the invitational conference on testing problems stressed the responsibility of test program directors (in this instance state testing programs) for educating "teachers and administrators to a wiser and more effective use of test materials in dealing with the individual pupil." (The Invitational Conference, 4) In fact it was urged that this be the director's major responsibility. This is just as necessary three decades later.

When one turns to one of the most useful of books on school testing programs he may be surprised to note how little attention is given by its writers (Findley, Ebel, Wrightstone) to this third standard in our list! Perhaps they take for granted the presence of effective leadership for the test program. Our point is that this essential ingredient of a good program can not be taken for granted.

4. *Effective use of tests in schools demands constant attention to upgrading the understandings and skills of all the staff in the area of testing and test usage.*

Many teachers, counselors and school administrators have had only minimal education in the tests and measurement aspects of education. A shocking number of teachers have had none. If only to make teachers more sensitive to what tests "do to them," to use Tyler's expression (Tyler, 46 ff.), we need on-the-job programs of education. Dyer has insisted that "testing, taken in its broadest sense, is indispensable to teaching." (Dyer,

777) Yet many teachers do not accept such a sweeping assertion. Perhaps this is in part because, again to quote Dyer, "in fact a considerable part of the testing that goes on in schools is divorced from teaching. It has become part of the mystique of the school psychologist and the guidance counselor, and usually yields only incidental information for use in the actual management of instruction. This may explain why many teachers perceive standardized tests as either threatening or irrelevant." (Dyer, 777)

Also, it needs to be noted that many teachers, like many lay people, have read the blasts at testing which have been popularized by magazines and books written by persons who have developed exceedingly limited understandings of testing and exceedingly strong convictions about testing. Hoffman, for example, a physicist, can write a whole book about the evils of multiple choice tests (Hoffman) and give it a title that makes it very sellable. Many teachers have read this and similar books and their own professional preparation has not been such as to help them much in evaluating the validity of the critics' arguments. The "reformer" we are told, is a man who says "let my conscience be your guide." Those who would reform school testing find far too many educators quite willing to accept their conclusions, unsupported though they be, except by invective and vituperation.

One of the effective means of in-service education regarding tests and testing programs has been shown to be the occasional all-staff evaluation of the school's testing program. (Hill, 1959; Hill, 1960) It has been shown that the whole staff of a system can be involved in careful assessment of the tests given, their uses, and possible changes in the testing program. Such an evaluation results not only in improved testing but also provides a good means of up-grading test understandings by the staff members. Again, we would like to emphasize that these in-service efforts apply to *all* the staff. As Hunt has said, "Perhaps the most effective assurance against abuse of tests would come from better training in psychometrics for school administrators, guidance counselors and teachers." (Hunt, 21)

5. *Effective use of tests in schools requires careful attention to the education of parents and other lay people regarding tests and their use.* Such a standard stated two decades ago would have sounded a bit strange. Today it would be expected and missed, if not included. Educators today must know how to deal with the best fed, the best dressed, the best educated and the most anxious parents we have ever had in this country of ours. Test producers and others have tried hard to help parents come to understand what testing in schools is all about. Witness the bulletins published by the best publishers:

"On Telling Parents About Test Results," Test Service Bulletin, No. 54, The Psychological Corporation, New York City, December, 1960.

"How to Tell Parents About Standardized Test Results," by Walter N. Durost, Test Dept., Harcourt, Brace and World, New York City, Test Service Notebook, No. 76, 1961.

"Why Do We Test Your Children?" by Walter N. Durost, Harcourt, Brace and World, New York City, Test Service Notebook, No. 17, 1956.

Hunt's fine little pamphlet for the Public Affairs Pamphlet series (Hunt) and Hawes' more ambitious treatment, "Educational Testing for the Millions" (Hawes) have made constructive contributions to parental understanding.

These published resource materials mean little unless in the local school efforts are made to help the parents at hand to become enlightened regarding their school's testing. Some schools have found a good response when parents were given the opportunity to take samples of the ability, achievement and interest measures used with their children. Schools which use the parent conference instead of the periodic grade card have found it possible to help parents grow in their understanding of their child's developmental processes by using growth charts to convey a picture of the child's development to parents. Such charts include the results of recurring ability and achievement tests.

Of one thing we are sure: The parents of a given child make significant contributions to that child's developing conceptions of himself. If these contributions are to be supportive and are to help the child to develop a true picture of his abilities and achievements, parents must be consulted and informed from the primary grades onward as they, with the teacher, seek to achieve a growing understanding of how this particular child is developing. Recurrent testing of ability and achievement, and later of interests, can contribute helpfully in this process. Needless to say, such a process also helps place test results in their proper perspective along with the many other facts about a child that the school should be gathering.

6. ***The use of test results, interpretation of test scores, should always be kept within a framework of child study that is as comprehensive as possible.*** Perhaps no more common abuse of test results is to be witnessed in schools and colleges than the use of a single score in isolation from all else that is known about the person. Years ago it was my privilege to hear Sidney Pressey talk about what he called "functional intelligence." He drummed away at the point that the usable intellectual ability of a student consisted of (1) his work habits, (2) his accumulated knowledge and understanding, (3) his drive, zeal, or motivation,

and (4) his measurable ability. Many other specialists well versed in testing have told us the same thing. Bordin answers the question he uses for a journal article, "Will testing tell the story?" with the statement "tests by no means give us the complete picture, but they do make a contribution." (Bordin) Findley puts down as his number one recommendation regarding school testing that "Testing is an essential supplementary tool in the operation of schools but should never be a dominant one." (Findley, 4) Berdie admonishes counselors to "combine all relevant evidence in predicting student success . . . direct observation, reports and records, student self-descriptions, and psychological and educational tests." (Berdie, 114) Berdie makes the perceptive and entirely valid recommendation that "the counselor must face the paradox of defeating his predictions—when they are unfavorable—through counseling" by encouraging the student to take risks and thus sometimes succeed when the evidence is against success! (Berdie, 113–4)

1. ***The use of tests in schools must, as in the use of information not gained from tests, be rooted in the rigorous application of standards to this information.*** All information used in schools to characterize children or to draw conclusions about them, must be subjected to reasonable criteria. They can best be stated as questions, and they are worded so as to point to the major concern—the welfare of the individual child—

   Is this information true? This is our familiar criterion of validity.

   Is this information fresh? A test score from last year may mean little today.

   An anecdotal record from last week may not tell us much about the child today.

   The recorded occupation of a father, in the file folder, may have been determined a month ago. Today it may be questionable as to its accuracy.

   Is this information developmental? Information from the child's yesterdays can enhance our understanding of him today if it can be seen in such a way as to tell us something about how this child is developing. The growth chart does this for us with recurring administrations of mental ability tests, achievement tests, physical measures and the like.

   Is this information complete? This is our standard number six.

These criteria are applicable to anything we think we know about a child, and as applicable to test scores as to any other information. This means that there must be constant surveillance of the records we keep, the personnel folders we maintain regarding each student. These criteria must

be applied to the information at hand by persons who are most knowledgable. Probably the best way to apply these criteria to a given child's folder is to conduct a case conference involving several adults in this child's life. The sifting and discussion of what we collectively know about him is bound to raise questions regarding this information and to result in discarding some of the "facts" we have at hand.

4. *In testing and in the use of test results, persistent efforts must be extended to reduce the impact of tests in producing anxiety among children and to lessen the chances of undue competitiveness in testing.* One does not need to read the work of Sarason and his associates (Sarason) to know that test anxiety is a very real fact of life in the lives of children. Sarason tells us that they used test anxiety, from among several kinds of anxieties that they might have studied, because "both the tester and testee (be it an individual or group test situation) far more often than not perceive the testing situation to have an evaluative or assessment purpose and that it is important to do well, however differently 'well' might be defined by tester and testee." (Sarason et al., 9)

As one reads Brim, Neulinger and Glass's informative report of a study of the experiences of a sample of adults with intelligence tests there are several points at which one is inclined to ask 'I wonder how these adults really *felt* about this?' Was this a kind of experience which could produce anything but anxiety in adults? For example, it was reported that one third of these adults "said they had learned nothing about the tests their children had taken." (Brim et al., 42)

Test users should see, and I believe most of us do, that a test is, as Chauncey has put it "the most visible part of the pressure" (Chauncey, 140) that is brought to bear on children and youth as they are placed in the competitive scramble for marks, for admissions, for scholarships—for all the attainments which have both practical worth in our culture and high status value. Thus, one way we can reduce the competitive pressure is to make test results less visible. This requires that, both with groups of students and with them in individual counseling, we must constantly be relating test scores with the vast array of other informations which are relevant to the questions at hand.

Need it be said that this also entails programs of pre-test orientation for children and for their parents. It also entails insuring that those who administer tests maintain a poised and balanced approach to the testing experience. There is little doubt that a combination of such emphasis is required if testing is kept from becoming high-pressure in its impact. It is entirely correct, as Chauncey has said, that "tests can actually be a

valuable tool in reducing pressure," (Chauncey, 150) What is needed is the use of tests from early childhood on a periodic basis, with adequate guidance for children and parents, so that they "grow up" together in the process of maturing self-understanding that we have already described. In short, undue competitive pressure can be alleviated best by helping children develop the self-assurance which is rooted in self-understanding.

9. *Test users should use all their ingenuity to develop ways which will help children both to understand and retain information from tests and to use this information wisely.* This touches on matters we have already discussed, but here I would like to emphasize test use by school counselors in elementary and secondary schools. First let me urge counselors—as I am sure many have already done—to read with care the highly critical discussion of testing provided by Rothney and his associates. (Rothney *et. al.*) While we may cringe a bit at some of his blasts, especially his junking of interest measurement, we need this kind of an antidote for the rather heavy emphasis on testing most of us experienced during education for our positions. But let me also urge the reading of such discussions as Borelle's on the counselor's use of tests. (Borelle) Here we find a rather hard-boiled treatment of tests for predictive purposes to which some of our Rogerian counselors need to pay more attention. In short, counselors should be the most critical and the most skilled users of tests on any school staff.

Since there is the most hope for children, from a developmental standpoint, while they are still in elementary school, I believe the increasing use of counselors in the grade schools is one of the most hopeful educational developments of our day. This can mean not only better guidance in these schools, but far better test usage, if these counselors function as they should. The most common expectation school staffs have of the elementary school counselor is that she will be an expert in child study. Every one of our first eight standards, therefore, has a *special* significance for the new elementary school counselor.

The information we have regarding how well pupils understand and retain information gained from tests is not encouraging. Ohlsen has provided us with the best summary in print of the several studies and discussions of this matter. (Ohlsen) Interpretation is not enough; this must lead to improvement in self-understanding. Nowhere can this be so intimately and completely revealed as in the counselling relationship.

10. *Tests users should insist upon periodic evaluations of the school's testing program by all the professional persons involved in testing and*

test usage. It has been demonstrated that it is both possible and profitable to do this (Hill, 1959; Hill, 1960) Hill has developed an inventory for evaluating school testing programs which has been used successfully in a number of systems. It is very important that these evaluations involve everyone in the system, or at least a representative cross section of all staff members. Persons who at first say "I simply don't know enough about our testing program" can be encouraged to enhance their knowledge. Often they actually know a lot more—as consumers at least—than they think they do. The experience of working at the evaluation greatly increases their knowledge.

11. *Considerable attention should be given to the ethical standards regarding testing that have been promulgated by various professional groups*, especially the American Personnel and Guidance Association and the American Psychological Association. (APGA, APA) In these statements of ethics, when testing is involved, the emphasis is upon protecting the child, seeing to it that test scores are made available only to authorized persons, that interpretation is professionally sound. The ethical statements also emphasize the need to view test scores in a context of the other relevant information about the child that can be so rich and so enlightening. Through these statements of ethical standards one senses a search for reasonable balance between our finding out what we can about the child—all for his own good, of course—and protection for this child from undue intrusion upon his privacy. The delicacy of this balance is amply illustrated by the problems faced, and the methods used, by the U. S. Office of Education's Bureau of Research. (Conrad) They make no bones of the fact that ultimate authority for determining the methods we use in seeking to understand children rests with the people. Conrad makes a plea that "social science must not become identified in the public mind with 'snooping' and 'prying'." (Conrad, 171) Need it be said that this problem, in fact the whole matter of ethical practices in testing, entails *both* areas of decision-making, as described by Mehrens. "Individual decisions, where a person, such as a student, is making a decision about himself on the basis of test information." (Mehrens, 67) The other area of decision-making is "where somebody else, such as an administrator or counselor, is making decisions about a person."

Whether we see this as an ethical problem—and to this writer it is certainly such—or as a problem of professional competence and skill, we test users must be constantly on the alert to avoid the four harmful conse-

quences of test usage which Ebel has underlined. He points out that testing may—

> —place an indelible stamp of intellectual status—superior, mediocre, or inferior—on a child and thus predetermine his social status as an adult, and possibly do irreparable harm to his self-esteem and his educational motivation.
>
> —lead to a narrow conception of ability, encourage pursuit of this single goal, and thus tend to reduce the diversity of talent available to society.
>
> —place the testers in a position to control education and determine the destinies of individual human beings, while, incidentally, making the testers themselves rich in the process.
>
> —encourage impersonal, inflexible, mechanistic processes of evaluation and determination, so that essential human freedoms are limited or lost altogether.—(Ebel, 132–3)

Ebel goes on to mention several other possible negative consequences of testing. These include individual competition as against social cooperation, conformity as against creativity, cultural bias, neglect of important intangibles, invasions of privacy, injustice to individuals and rewards for specious testing taking skill.

Ebel's suggestions to us regarding ways in which we can avoid these possible negative consequences of testing are so sound that I repeat them verbatim:

> 1. We could emphasize the use of tests to *improve* status and de-emphasize their use to determine status.
> 2. We could broaden the base achievements tested to recognize and develop the wide variety of talents needed in our society.
> 3. We could share openly with the persons directly concerned all that tests have revealed to us about their abilities and prospects.
> 4. We could decrease the use of tests to impose decisions on others, and instead increase their use as a basis for better personal decision making.—(Ebel, 147)

Finally

In stating eleven standards for test users the writer ends both with feelings of encouragement and with a sense of deep concern. We know more today about how to build good tests than we have ever known. Test program management has greatly improved. Most teachers are being provided at least minimal preparation in tests and measurement before they start to teach. Counselors are present in more and more schools—including the

elementary schools—and these counselors tend to be persons quite knowledgeable in testing and test usage; thus building staffs are in a better position to use tests better than was once the case. People turn out in considerable numbers for conferences on testing and read a voluminous literature on testing. Public interest in testing is high and criticisms from laymen have been helpful.

Concern, however, arises, as we note that, despite our increased knowledgeability regarding test construction, the range of educational objectives and of human characteristics dependably measured by tests is still woefully narrow. Far too many school systems still do not have capable test coordinators on their staffs. Teacher education programs are still, by and large, weak in the tests and measurement area; and they have been weakened in part because of the spineless way we have given in to the raucus demands of narrow academicians to "eliminate the methods courses!" Most of our elementary schools still do not have counselors; in fact only about a fourth have *any* pupil personnel worker in the school as much as one day a week. (American elementary schools are, in fact, shockingly and disgracefully under-staffed.) I won't comment on the impact of conferences and professional literature as means of up-grading our skills in the use of tests; that's getting too close to home. Public interest is still badly under-informed and often misinformed regarding testing.

May I add, while on this negative note, that our test experts disappoint us also. When I look, for example, at a "Test Giver's Self-Inventory" issued by a test publisher and find almost no attention in it to test usage and test interpretation, even in the section labeled "after the testing period," I wonder *why* they are publishing tests. Also when I examine an issue of the *Review of Educational Research* (February, 1965) and find in it only one and a half of its 101 pages devoted to "interpretation", I am discouraged. It is even worse to cull the issue and find no reference to actual research on interpretation, except as the improvement of tests themselves make for better interpretation, a hope, but not necessarily a reality.

Thus we have both hopeful and discouraging—yet challenging—prospects for test usage in our schools. Our standards started with a strong emphasis upon the child as the prime user of tests. We believe that all tests are self-revelatory devices and thus must be used, and especially must be interpreted, with the prime purpose of enhancing the child's growth in self-understanding. We believe that testing programs in schools and colleges need coordinating leadership of top-notch professionals who are both technically and humanely qualified for this work. We believe that all school staffs need constant assistance with their growth in sophistication regard-

ing tests and test usage. We believe the parents and the general lay public need the same kind of help. We believe that child study and individual appraisal efforts in schools and colleges need the broadest possible base, that they require skillful use of a great variety of methods for enhancing self-understanding and staff understanding of the child. We believe that everything we think we know about a child requires the application of rigorous and exacting standards of validity, freshness, completeness, and developmental wholeness. We believe that testing and test usage can be managed with minimal emphasis upon pressure and competitiveness and must be, if tests are to serve their proper purposes in schools. We believe that the most significant use of test results is in individual counseling and in any other procedures which help the student to understand, to retain and to apply sensibly what tests tell him. We believe that school testing programs require periodic evaluations by the whole staff and that this is one of our best in-service activities. We believe that a sensitive understanding and application of ethical standards is needed in testing and test usage. Especially is it important always to remember that we work in social-service institutions, that the public has ultimate responsibility for these institutions and that we professionals must be able and willing to give proper regard to the public will.

While there are discouraging problems in our midst, as regards testing and test usage, my own conviction is that we are doing far better than we did two decades ago. Two decades from now we had better be doing far better than we are now.

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